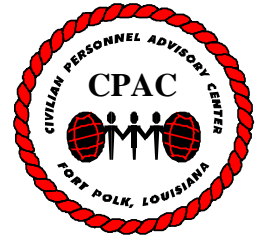




**JOINT READINESS TRAINING CENTER AND FORT POLK
CIVILIAN PERSONNEL ADVISORY CENTER
FORT POLK, LOUISIANA 71459-5341**



"A Return to Prominence – One Satisfied Customer at a Time"

**CPAC INFORMATION BULLETIN
NUMBER 84**

July 2006

**NSPS INFORMATION
UPDATE**

In last month's edition of the CPAC Information Bulletin, among other things, we explained the NSPS conversion process, which is, how you will convert to NSPS and how it works. Since **pay** is an issue of importance to most employees, this month we will answer frequently asked questions about **pay under NSPS**.

Pay

What types of pay increases will employees receive under NSPS?

- There are several ways employees can receive a pay increase under NSPS:
- Rate range adjustment
- Local market supplement (LMS) adjustment
- Performance-based increase
- Promotion
- Reassignment or other placement action
- Accelerated Compensation for Developmental Positions (ACDP)

What constitutes an employee's adjusted salary under NSPS?

- Worldwide base rate, plus local market supplement, plus performance based pay adjustment, equals an employee's adjusted salary.
- One-time performance based bonuses and cash awards are in addition to the total pay.

Will we still get Within-Grade-Increases (WGIs)?

- Under NSPS and the pay banding system, there are no "steps" similar to the GS system. Instead, pay increases and/or performance bonuses are based on your performance.
- Upon conversion to NSPS, many employees will receive a salary increase equal to the amount they have earned towards their next within grade increase.

- After an organization has converted to NSPS, money that would have been used for WGIs will become part of the money available for performance payouts.

What are the criteria for being eligible to receive the WGI buy-in upon conversion to NSPS?

- Employees are eligible for the WGI buy-in if they are below the top step (Step 10) of their assigned grade; have an acceptable rating of record; and are not on pay retention.

Are GM employees eligible for the WGI buy-in?

- Yes. Employees under the GM pay plan are also entitled to the WGI buy-in provided they meet the criteria mentioned above.

How are pay bands structured?

- Under the NSPS classification system, every GS position within the Department will be assigned to a career group, pay schedule, and pay band.
- Many of the factors used to classify positions under NSPS are the same as those contained in the old system, such as complexity and level of work.
- There are four career groups: Standard Career Group; Scientific & Engineering Career Group; Investigative & Protective Services Career Group; and Medical Career Group.
- There are typically four pay schedules: Professional/Analytical; Technician/support; Supervisor/Manager; and Student.
- There are typically three pay bands for each pay schedule: Expert; Journey; and Entry/Development.

What is a rate range adjustment and who gets one?

- Each pay band has a rate range - minimum level and maximum level.
- Each rate range can increase, decrease, or remain the same depending on market drivers (specific labor market, occupational, or other demands).
- Rate ranges are reviewed at least once a year, but adjustments can be made at any time during the year.

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- New rate ranges for all pay schedules are effective the first full pay period beginning in January of each year.
- In order to receive an increase to the minimum rate, employees must not be at the maximum of the pay band's new rate range and must have a rating above unacceptable (Level 1).

Who has the authority to make decisions on rate range adjustments?

- The Secretary of Defense has the authority to set and adjust rate ranges.

What is a Local Market Supplement (LMS) and how does it work?

- A LMS replaces locality pay and special salary rates under the GS system.
- Employees must have a rating of record of Level 2 (Fair) or higher.
- At least once a year, DoD reviews each LMS and makes appropriate adjustments.
- Factors reviewed in making LMS determinations:
 - Mission requirements
 - Labor-market conditions
 - Availability of funds
 - Allowances and differentials, such as those paid to employees overseas and in Alaska and Hawaii
 - Similar pay adjustments received by employees of other federal agencies
 - Other relevant factors.

At the time of conversion to NSPS, will LMS be the same as the locality pay employees are currently receiving?

- Until determined otherwise by the Secretary of Defense, the standard LMS will be the same as GS locality pay for each area at the time of conversion.

How are special salary rates converted to NSPS?

- In most cases, special salary rates will be included within the broader pay ranges of the NSPS pay bands (including the addition of the standard LMS).
- For employees paid from a special salary table with a maximum that exceeds the pay band maximum (and the applicable standard LMS), a targeted LMS will be established.
- The targeted LMS will ensure that such employees convert to NSPS without a loss of pay.

Can employees receive a pay increase when reassigned to a different position?

- Yes, under NSPS, employees have the opportunity to affect their pay based on performance and the

opportunities they seek for promotions and reassignments.

- Employee-initiated reassignment: May receive up to a cumulative 5% in base salary in a 12-month period, no matter how many times the employee is voluntarily reassigned that year.
- Management-directed reassignment: May receive up to 5% in base salary for each reassignment. There is no limit to the number of times employee can receive a management-directed reassignment.
- Voluntarily move to a lower pay band: Base salary must be set within the assigned pay band. Management may increase base salary up to 5% (not to exceed the maximum of the rate range).

How much pay increase can employees expect when promoted?

- Under NSPS, a promotion is a temporary or permanent move to a position in a higher pay band.
- When employees receive a promotion, their pay increases by a minimum of 6% and, with management approval, may increase up to 20%.
- If the promotion is temporary, the employee's base salary reverts to that of the employee's permanent position upon termination of temporary promotion.

What happens to the January General Pay Increase (GPI) for employees in Spirals 1.1, 1.2, and 1.3?

- All eligible employees in Spiral 1.1, 1.2, and 1.3 will receive the equivalent of the 2007 GPI, as prescribed by the Office of Personnel Management.

How will DoD insure the money is really paid out to the employees?

- DoD Components must certify that pay pool funds are used only for the compensation of civilian employees.
- In fact, the law requires that the aggregate amount of money allocated for civilian compensation for organizations under NSPS cannot be less than the amount that would have been allocated under the existing GS system.

Well, that just about covers the issue of pay. For more details and to ready yourself for conversion when it's your turn to spiral in, we would strongly suggest that you consider taking the on-line course, NSPS 101. You can access the course by going to <http://cpol.army.mil/library/general/nsps>. This course was designed to initiate employees to NSPS. It covers such topics as conversion to NSPS and pay under NSPS. The estimated time to complete is one and one-half hours. You can have official time to take it. You need only ask your supervisor. You'll be glad you did.

FROM THE DESK OF THE CPAC DIRECTOR

ICE Kudos and Slams

Here we are again to share with you comments received from our "satisfied" customers and also our "not so satisfied" customers. As we did last time, we will start out with the good first.

"KUDOS"

"Excellent Staff!! Commendable Customer Service!!!!HOOAH!!!"

"...is always helpful and efficient, while maintaining a pleasant attitude. So nice to have someone like her to go to for assistance." "Working with...is a pleasure. Her caring attitude and speedy replies are commendable. She has the right "I care about you" attitude. Thank you so much for all of your help!!"

"...HR Assistant, provided timely and informative responses to my question. She is to be commended for her prompt service."

"...is exceptional in keeping MODERN/ART information passed to users; assisting in resetting of passwords on the same date requested; and any other services she renders in HR. Thanks for a job well done."

"ANONYMOUS SLAMS"

We are very pleased to report that during this reporting period, there were no anonymous complaints from dissatisfied customers received by the CPAC.

Remember, It is our goal to "return to prominence - one satisfied customer at a time." If at any time you are not happy with the services provided to you by any member of the CPAC family, just give me a call at 531-1840 and let's talk about it.

*Until next time...
Donald Mallet*



**"A Return to Prominence - One Satisfied
Customer at a Time"**

DID YOU KNOW

Your local servicing CPAC is available and prepared to address any general or specific questions or problems you may have related to your pay, leave, ratings, awards, where to locate specific regulations and various other general HR information. We have quick access to your records and will be able to provide a speedy resolution to your inquiries.

Civilian Personnel Advisory Center (CPAC)

7041 Radio Rd, Bldg. 412

Phone: (337) 531-1840 or (337) 531-4020

Email: laura.mireles@us.army.mil

WORKFORCE PLANNING- OUTPLACEMENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

In our last four articles on workforce planning, we looked at recruitment strategy/sources, the selection process, reduction in force (RIF) and Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC). This month we will focus on Outplacement Assistance Programs.

The Department of Defense has earned a well-deserved reputation for making every effort to ensure continuing employment for employees who are displaced through no fault of their own. The Department of Defense administers several programs to assist displaced employees in locating acceptable jobs. Let's take a look at these programs.

DoD Priority Placement Program (PPP). The PPP is an automated referral program that matches eligible registrants with job opportunities at DoD activities. The PPP is an independent outplacement program operated solely within the administrative authority of the Secretary of Defense. It should not be confused with the Reemployment Priority List (RPL), which is described below. If you are facing involuntary separation, downgrade, or transfer of function outside of your commuting area, you are generally eligible to register in the PPP for placement consideration at other DoD installations. However, if you are entitled to receive severance pay benefits and do not voluntarily enroll in the PPP, registration is mandatory for all DoD activities within your commuting area on receipt of a specific separation notice. Registration in the PPP does not guarantee you an offer of continued employment, since placements may only occur when registrants are well

qualified for positions that are being filled. Unless your registration is mandatory, you may voluntarily register for desired locations and grade levels, provided your choices are within program guidelines. Normally, when a PPP registrant is referred for a specific vacancy, and is determined well qualified by the registering and gaining CPAC/CPOC, an offer is required. Use of the Automated Stopper and Referral System (ASARS), the Internet-based system used to administer the PPP, ensures your consideration within the Department of Defense. It is important to recognize that proper registration will minimize delays in the referral and placement process. Therefore, you should be prepared to discuss with your supporting CPAC the types of positions for which you are well qualified and available, areas where you would be willing to relocate, and the grade level(s) below your current permanent or retained grade that you are willing to accept. Generally, you may remain in the Program for the duration of the specific notice period and for up to 12 months after separation. During the registration period, placement in an appropriate position, declination of a valid offer or optional retirement will terminate your registration. If you are not entitled to severance pay, registration is entirely voluntary and you may request to be removed from the Program at any time. You are only eligible for one valid offer through the PPP. If you accept a DoD position outside of your current commuting area, the Government will pay related relocation costs to your new duty station to the maximum extent permitted under the DoD Joint Travel Regulations, Volume 2.

DoD Retained Grade Placement Program (Program R). If you are on a competitive or excepted appointment and are serving under grade retention as a result of RIF or job reclassification, you are required to register in this program. The area of referral for the duration of the retained grade period is your commuting area and normally must include all DoD installations within that area. However, if you previously relocated through the PPP to your current DoD activity at Government expense, registration is restricted to your current installation for 1 year from the effective date of the placement. After 1 year, your area of referral will be expanded to include all other DoD activities within the commuting area. If you receive a valid and reasonable offer in writing, you must accept the offer or lose your retained grade entitlement.

Defense Outplacement Referral System (DORS). DORS is a voluntary referral system that is sometimes used as a recruitment source by DoD activities in the U.S. and overseas. It should not be confused with the Department's mandatory placement program, the PPP. Registration in DORS is strictly voluntary and DoD activities are under no obligation to make offers to registrants. Employees cannot be registered in DORS and

PPP simultaneously. However, DORS affords you the opportunity to be considered for positions at other DoD activities prior to your PPP registration. The spouse of a DoD employee may also register in DORS, as long as the employee is registered in PPP or DORS.

Reemployment Priority List (RPL). The RPL is a government-wide program required by law and subject to OPM regulations. While participation in the RPL is an additional opportunity for placement consideration, the program is totally separate from the DoD PPP. In order to be eligible to exercise your reemployment rights according to the OPM regulations, you must apply separately for the RPL. The following provides general RPL requirements and guidelines:

- (1) If you are scheduled for RIF separation from a career or career-conditional appointment, you may be eligible to register in both the RPL and PPP.
- (2) If you are an RPL registrant with career status, you will remain on the list for up to 2 years from the date of registration. If you have career-conditional status, you will remain on the list for up to 1 year.
- (3) Your RPL rights apply only to DoD installations within the same commuting area as the position from which you have been, or will be, separated.
- (4) If you register for the RPL, you will receive preference over non-DoD applicants for vacant competitive service DoD positions that match your qualifications.
- (5) To be entered on the RPL, you must submit a Federal application or resume to your supporting CPAC within 30 calendar days after the RIF separation date.
- (6) To be eligible to apply, you must: Have received a specific RIF notice of separation or a Certificate of Expected Separation (CES); Be in the competitive service in tenure group I or II; Have received a performance rating above unacceptable as the last annual performance rating of record; and have not declined a RIF offer with the same type of work schedule and a representative rate of pay at least as high as that of the position from which you have been, or will be, separated.
- (7) Your RPL registration will terminate prior to the end of your eligibility period if you: Request removal in writing; Separate for other reasons prior to the RIF effective date; Accept a permanent appointment in any Federal agency; Decline or fail to reply to a written offer or inquiry of availability for a position with the same type of work schedule and a representative rate of pay at least as high as the position from which you have been, or will be, separated; or Decline or fail to appear for an interview; or cannot be contacted.
- (8) If you believe that your reemployment priority rights under the RPL have

been violated, you may appeal to the Merit Systems Protection Board (MSPB).

Interagency Career Transition Assistance Plan (ICTAP). ICTAP provides you priority consideration for positions in OTHER Federal agencies. Eligibility for ICTAP begins on the date your agency issues you a specific RIF separation notice or proposed separation notice for declining a management-directed reassignment or TOF outside the commuting area, and ends 1 year from your separation date. To be eligible, you must: (1) Be a current or former career or career-conditional competitive service employee; (2) Be separated or facing separation; (3) Have a fully successful or equivalent performance rating (current or last received); (4) Submit an application to the agency having the vacancy; and (5) Be well qualified for the vacant position.

The vacancy must be in the same commuting area as the location where you were or are being separated. If you meet the eligibility requirements, the agency must select you before hiring from outside the agency. The ICTAP requires Federal agencies to publish information at <http://www.usajobs.opm.gov> on all competitive service vacancies being recruited outside the agency. The application you submit must comply with all job announcement instructions and include a copy of your RIF separation notice or notice of proposed removal for declining a management-directed reassignment or Transfer of Function.

Next month we will continue coverage of outplacement programs by looking at the services available to adversely affected employees through the Army Career and Alumni Program (ACAP) at Fort Polk and the State of Louisiana Workforce Investment Act Services (WIA).

Test your knowledge!

BRAIN TEASER

Who invented the zipper?
Why do most Zippers have the
letters YKK on them?



Answer on page 15

VA TO PROVIDE FREE CREDIT MONITORING

In May 2006, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) learned that an employee, a data analyst, took home electronic data from VA that was stored in his home on a laptop computer and external hard drive. He was not authorized to take this data home. This behavior was in violation of VA policies.

The employee's home was burglarized and the computer equipment, along with various other items, was stolen. The electronic data stored on this computer included identifying information for millions of veterans. Authorities believe the computer equipment, rather than any data on it, was the target of the theft. It is possible the perpetrators remain unaware of the information that they possess or of how to make use of it. However, out of an abundance of caution, VA is taking all possible steps to protect and inform all veterans, service-members, and reservists potentially affected.

As part of the continuing efforts by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to protect and assist those potentially affected by the recent data theft, Secretary of Veterans Affairs R. James Nicholson announced that VA will provide one year of free credit monitoring to people whose sensitive personal information may have been stolen in the incident.

The Secretary said VA has no reason to believe the perpetrators who committed this burglary were targeting the data, and Federal investigators believe that it is unlikely that identity theft has resulted from the data theft.

VA will solicit bids from qualified companies to provide a comprehensive credit monitoring solution. VA will ask these companies to provide expedited proposals and to be prepared to implement them rapidly once they are under contract.

After VA hires a credit monitoring company, the Department will send a detailed letter to people whose sensitive personal information may have been included in the stolen data. This letter will explain credit monitoring and how eligible people can enroll or "opt-in" for the services. The Department expects to have the services in place and the letters mailed by mid-August.

Secretary Nicholson also announced VA is soliciting bids to hire a company that provides data-breach analysis, which will look for possible misuse of the stolen VA data. The analysis would help measure the risk of the data loss, identify suspicious misuse of identity information and expedite full assistance to affected people.

As part of VA's efforts to prevent such an incident from happening again, Secretary Nicholson previously announced a series of personnel changes in the Office of Policy and Planning, where the breach occurred; the hiring of former Maricopa County (Ariz.) prosecutor Richard Romley as a Special Advisor for Information Security; the expedited completion of Cyber Security Awareness Training and Privacy Awareness Training for all VA employees; that an inventory be

taken of all positions requiring access to sensitive VA data by June 30, 2006, to ensure that only those employees who need such access to do their jobs have it; that every laptop in VA undergo a security review to ensure that all security and virus software is current, including the immediate removal of any unauthorized information or software; and that VA facilities across the country – every hospital, Community-Based Outpatient Clinic (CBOC), regional office, national cemetery, field office and VA's Central Office – observe Security Awareness Week beginning June 26.

People who believe they may be affected by the data theft can go to www.firstgov.gov for more information. VA also continues to operate a call center that people can contact to get information about this incident and learn more about consumer-identity protections. That toll free number is 1-800-FED INFO (1-800-333-4636). The call center is operating from 8:00 am to 9:00 pm (EDT), Monday-Saturday as long as it is needed.

FAQ: VA THEFT OCCURANCE

What information was included?

The data lost is primarily limited to an individual's name, date of birth, and social security number. In some cases, spousal information may have been included. However, this information alone may be useful to identity thieves, and we recommend that all veterans, service-members, and reservists be extra vigilant in monitoring for signs of potential identity theft or misuse of this information. Importantly, the affected data did not include any of VA's electronic health records or any financial information.

[See June 6, 2006, News Release on New Information Involved in Data Loss](#)

The letter from VA says that the information stolen included disability ratings. What information does that included?

The information stolen did not include information from any medical information about any veteran, service-member, or reservist, nor did it include VA's electronic health records. For some veterans who have applied for VA disability compensation benefits and have been determined by VA to have a disability related to their military service, the data may have included the number of service-connected disabilities a veteran has and the veteran's overall disability percentage rating. No other information related to any veteran's disability rating was included.

How do I know if information about me was stolen?

At this point, we do not have information available to confirm the specific individuals whose personal information may have been included in this data loss. VA just recently identified through a data match with the Department of Defense (DoD) that information on approximately 2.2 million service-members and reservists was also included on the lost data file. The investigation is ongoing. Letters are being released to the affected individuals beginning on June 3. Because of the

number of affected individuals, the letters will be released over a period of about two weeks. Those who have been affected should expect to receive a letter by June 15. This timeframe may vary by a few days based on postal service schedules for mail delivery.

Does this only affect veterans discharged after 1975?

This data loss potentially affects all veterans who have ever filed a claim for VA disability compensation, pension, or education benefits, or who have (or had) a VA insurance policy – no matter when the claim was filed or when they were discharged. These veterans would be included even if their claim was denied or they are not currently receiving benefits. VA automated its records systems about 1975 and began regular input of information received from DoD on all separating veterans. When VA automated its records systems, VA also input data from all historical claimant records that had been manually maintained by the agency. We urge all veterans to be extra vigilant and monitor their financial accounts.

Were active-duty and National Guard/Reserve members included?

Working with the DoD, VA has determined that the data stolen on 26.5 million individuals included information on active-duty military personnel. Initially, it was thought that approximately 50,000 active duty, National Guard, and Reserve personnel might have been involved. However, as the two agencies compared electronic files, VA and DoD learned that personal information on as many as 1.1 million military members on active duty, 430,000 members of the National Guard, and 645,000 members of the Reserves may have been included in the data theft. VA receives records for every new accession and military enlistee because active-duty personnel and National Guard and Reservists are eligible to receive certain VA benefits, such as GI Bill educational assistance and the home loan guaranty benefit.

What should I do to protect myself? Do I have to close my bank account or cancel my credit cards?

At this point there is no evidence that any missing data has been used illegally. However, VA is asking all veterans to be extra vigilant and to carefully monitor bank statements, credit card statements, and any statements relating to recent financial transactions, and to immediately report any suspicious or unusual activity. For tips on how to guard against misuse of personal information, visit the Federal Trade Commission website at <http://www.ftc.gov/>. You do not have to close your bank account or cancel your credit cards. You should, however, take steps to protect yourself against identity theft. One way to monitor your financial accounts is to review your credit report. By law you are entitled to one free credit report each year. Request a free credit report from one of the three major credit bureaus – Equifax, Experian, TransUnion – at www.AnnualCreditReport.com or by calling 1-877-322-8228.

What do you mean by suspicious activity?

Suspicious activities could include the following:

- Inquiries from companies you haven't contacted or done business with
- Purchases or charges on your accounts you didn't make
- New accounts you didn't open or changes to existing accounts you didn't make

- Bills that don't arrive as expected
- Unexpected credit cards or account statements
- Denials of credit for no apparent reason
- Calls or letters about purchases you didn't make

What is identity theft?

Identity theft occurs when your personal information is stolen and used without your knowledge to commit fraud or other crimes.

I haven't noticed any suspicious activity in my financial statements, but what can I do to protect myself and prevent being victimized by credit card fraud or identity theft?

VA strongly recommends that veterans closely monitor their financial statements and review the guidelines provided on this web page (<http://www.firstgov.gov/veteransinfo>) or call 1 (800) FED INFO (1-800-333-4636).

Should I reach out to my financial institutions or will the Department of Veterans Affairs do this for me?

VA does not believe that it is necessary to contact financial institutions or cancel credit cards and bank accounts, unless you detect suspicious activity.

What is the earliest date at which suspicious activity might have occurred due to this data breach?

The VA employee's home was burglarized and the computer equipment was stolen on May 3, 2006. If the data has been misused or otherwise used to commit fraud or identity theft crimes, it is likely that affected groups may notice suspicious activity beginning in the month of May.

What should I do if I detect a problem with any of my accounts?

The Federal Trade Commission recommends the following **four** steps if you detect suspicious activity:

Step 1 – Contact the fraud department of one of the three major credit bureaus:

- Equifax: 1-800-525-6285; www.equifax.com; P.O. Box 740241, Atlanta, GA 30374-0241
- Experian: 1-888-EXPERIAN (397-3742); www.experian.com; P.O. Box 9532, Allen, Texas 75013
- TransUnion: 1-800-680-7289; www.transunion.com; Fraud Victim Assistance Division, P.O. Box 6790, Fullerton, CA 92834-6790

Step 2 – Close any accounts that have been tampered with or opened fraudulently.

Step 3 – File a police report with your local police or the police in the community where the identity theft took place.

Step 4 – File a complaint with the Federal Trade Commission by using the FTC's Identity Theft Hotline:

- By telephone: 1-877-438-4338
- Online at www.consumer.gov/idtheft
- By mail at Identity Theft Clearinghouse, Federal Trade Commission, 600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW, Washington DC 20580.

Where can I get more information?

Please check this web page (<http://www.firstgov.gov/veteransinfo>) for further updates or call 1 (800) FED INFO (1-800-333-4636).

What are my remedies if my identity is stolen and used illegally?

VA is working aggressively to determine what additional protections we may be able to provide to veterans as a result of this incident. We have not been advised of any special restitution that might be available for any losses related to this specific incident.

The Federal Trade Commission has produced a booklet to help you remedy the effects of an identity theft. It describes what steps to take, your legal rights, how to handle specific problems you may encounter on the way to clearing your name, and what to watch for in the future. The contents of the booklet, *Taking Charge: Fighting Back Against Identity Theft*, are available online at <http://www.ftc.gov/bcp/online/pubs/credit/idtheft.htm>.

Can Social Security put a flag on my number?

No, unlike the credit bureaus, the Social Security Administration (SSA) cannot put a flag or security alert of any type on your Social Security number. To report that someone is using your Social Security number, file a complaint with the Federal Trade Commission by using the four steps outlined above:

- Internet: www.consumer.gov/idtheft
- Telephone: 1-877-IDTHEFT (1-877-438-4338)

Can I get a new Social Security number?

SSA will not issue you a new Social Security number as a precaution, if you are concerned or think your number may have been stolen as part of the VA data theft. SSA assigns a new Social Security number in rare cases, and only if the number holder provides evidence that the old number has been used with criminal or harmful intent and that the misuse has caused the number holder to be subjected to recent economic or personal hardship.

The letter from VA warns individuals to guard against "phishing" efforts and telephone solicitations asking for personal information. What does this mean?

"Phishing" is a term that relates to unsolicited messages that individuals receive on their computers. "Phishers" send an e-mail or pop-up message that claims to be from a business or organization that you may deal with - for example, an Internet service provider (ISP), bank, online payment service, or even a government agency. The message may ask you to "update," "validate," or "confirm" your account information. Some "phishing" e-mails threaten a dire consequence if you don't respond. The messages direct you to a website that looks just like a legitimate organization's site. But it isn't. It's a bogus site whose sole purpose is to trick you into divulging your personal information so the operators can steal your identity and run up bills or commit crimes in your name. VA also warns individuals to beware of telephone solicitations by people who claim to be from VA or other trustworthy sources asking you to give personal information or to verify or correct personal information. VA, other government agencies, and legitimate organizations will not contact you to ask for or confirm your personal information. If you receive such communications,

report them to VA though this toll free number: 1-800-FED-INFO (1-800-333-4636).

If I need a police report to claim identity theft, where do I get that?

Individuals who are victims of actual identity theft should not have a problem filing a local police report about the incident. The Federal Trade Commission advises consumers who are victims of identity theft to get a copy of the police report or at the very least, the number of the report. It can help you deal with creditors who need proof of the crime. If the police are reluctant to take your report, ask to file a "Miscellaneous Incidents" report, or try another jurisdiction, like your state police. You also can check with your state Attorney General's office to find out if state law requires the police to take reports for identity theft. Check the Blue Pages of your telephone directory for the phone number or check www.naag.org for a list of state Attorneys General. Information about steps to take if you are a victim of identity theft is available online at www.consumer.gov or by calling the Federal Trade Commission at 1-877-IDTHEFT (1-877-438-4338).

What do I do if the local police won't take a report?

In order to file a police report, you must show you have suffered an actual identity theft or harm due to fraudulent activity or misuse of account information. If you have experienced identity theft or harm, the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) suggests providing as much documentation as you can to prove your case, including debt collection reports, credit reports, or other evidence of fraudulent activity. Information about steps to take if you are a victim of identity theft is available online at www.consumer.gov or by calling the Federal Trade Commission at 1-877-IDTHEFT (1-877-438-4338). The FTC also suggests being persistent if local authorities tell you that they can't take a report. Stress the importance of a police report; many creditors require one to resolve your dispute. The FTC advises that if you're told that identity theft is not a crime under your state law, ask to file a Miscellaneous Incident Report instead. If you can't get the local police to take a report, try your county police. If that doesn't work, try your state police. Some states require the police to take reports for identity theft. Check with the office of your State Attorney General www.naag.org to find out if your state has this law.

Can I get a copy of the police report about the stolen computer and veterans' data?

We do not have access to any police reports or any other investigative reports filed as a result of this incident. The investigations by the police, VA's Inspector General, and the FBI are still ongoing.

We have heard that the stolen computer equipment contained records on 26.5 million veterans. Are the 2.2 million active-duty and guard/reserve members' records in addition to that number?

No, the active duty and guard/reserve individuals are part of the 26.5 million. Through continuing efforts to identify, to every extent possible, what information was included in the data on the stolen computer, VA has determined that active-duty and guard/reserve members were included.

I have never applied for benefits from VA. Do I need to be concerned?

The electronic data on the stolen computer equipment includes information from many veterans, service-members, and reservists who have never filed for VA benefits or contacted VA. Since the 1970s, VA has received information from DoD on all who served. If you are a veteran, you are encouraged to take steps to protect yourself against identity theft, whether or not you have ever applied for VA benefits. VA is taking steps to notify affected individuals by letter. These letters should be received by June 15, allowing a few additional days for delivery by the postal service.

I am the spouse, widow, or child of a veteran. Was my information included?

It is unclear whether any spousal or dependents' information has been compromised. However, if this did occur, it appears it would be a very small number of people.

Will I still get my monthly benefit payment?

Yes. There will be no impact on benefit payments.

To whom is VA sending letters?

VA is sending individual notification letters to veterans, service-members, and reservists whose personal information was included on the stolen computer equipment.

When will the letter go out?

The letters will be released over a period of about two weeks, beginning on June 3, 2006.

If I didn't get a letter, does that mean I wasn't affected?

If you did not get a letter, in all likelihood your identifying information was not part of the data that was on the stolen computer equipment.

I have never contacted VA directly. How do you know my address?

VA does not have current addresses for all affected individuals. However, the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) has agreed to forward all the letters to the affected veterans, service-members, and reservists. It is important to understand that the IRS has not disclosed your address or any other tax information to VA. VA identified the affected veterans to the IRS. The IRS is releasing the letters for VA.

Can I give you my address to make sure you have it?

We believe that virtually all affected veterans, service-members, and reservists will be contacted through the process we have established with IRS. We are therefore not taking addresses by phone.

If you receive VA benefits or have a claim pending and would like to change your address with VA, please contact your local VA regional office by phone at 1-800-827-1000 or in writing. For a [directory](http://www1.va.gov/directory/guide/home.asp) of VA Benefits and other offices, visit <http://www1.va.gov/directory/guide/home.asp>.

I'd like to see the letter even though I didn't get one. Can you send it to me?

VA sent the letter to potentially affected veterans, service-members, and reservists. A copy of the [letter](http://www.firstgov.gov/veteransinfo_letter.shtml) is available online at FirstGov.gov, at http://www.firstgov.gov/veteransinfo_letter.shtml. A copy of the [enclosure](http://www.firstgov.gov/veteransinfo_letter/enclosure.shtml) mailed with the letter is available at http://www.firstgov.gov/veteransinfo_letter/enclosure.shtml.

I got the mailing from VA. However, the envelope was empty (or the mailing was missing the Answers to Frequently Asked Question enclosure, or the letter from the Secretary was missing). How can I get a replacement copy?

You can access a copy immediately on the Internet at:

- [letter](#)
- [enclosure](#)

If you don't have access to the Internet, please call 1 (800) FED-INFO. We will send you a replacement copy of the letter.

How Will VA Provide Credit Monitoring?

As part of the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) continuing efforts to protect and assist those potentially affected by the recent data theft that occurred at an employee's Maryland home, VA announced on June 21 that the agency will provide one year of free credit monitoring to individuals whose sensitive personal information - Social Security Number (SSN) - may have been stolen in the incident. VA has no reason to believe the perpetrators who committed this burglary were targeting the data, and Federal investigators believe that it is unlikely that identity theft has resulted from the data theft.

How does an individual sign up for credit monitoring?

VA will solicit bids from qualified companies beginning the week of June 21. Once this process has been completed, VA will be sending follow-up letters to those whose sensitive personal information - Social Security Number (SSN) - may have been included in the data theft. The follow-up letters will contain specific instructions on how individuals can sign up for free credit monitoring, as well as other information.

An individual who chooses to sign up for the credit monitoring service, including the insurance, will not be asked or required to relinquish any legal claim that he or she might have against VA in order to receive the credit monitoring and insurance that VA will offer.

How long before VA will begin credit monitoring?

Once the solicitation for bids process is completed, VA will hire and begin working with the selected organization to organize the sign up process and arrange for letters to be sent to those eligible for monitoring. VA will ask industry to provide expedited proposals, and to be prepared to implement them rapidly once they are under contract. VA anticipates having free credit monitoring available to those eligible by mid-August.

What information will the follow-up letter provide?

The follow-up letter will explain credit monitoring and how eligible individuals can enroll.

Who will receive this follow-up letter?

VA will be sending follow-up letters to individuals whose sensitive personal information - Social Security Number (SSN) - may have been included in the data theft.

Are spouses who may have been affected eligible for credit monitoring?

Individuals whose sensitive personal information - Social Security Number (SSN) - may have been included in the data theft will be eligible for free credit monitoring.

Are only individuals who previously received letters from VA eligible for credit monitoring, or is it being made available to all veterans and active duty service members?

VA is committed to providing free credit monitoring to those who sign up for the program and whose sensitive personal information - Social Security Number (SSN) - may have been included in the stolen data.

What will VA do if there is evidence that fraud has been committed against individuals as a result of the data breach?

Insurance providing monetary theft protection and other safeguards is included in standard credit monitoring services.

What is VA doing about this?

VA is working with the President's Identity Theft Task Force, the Department of Justice, and the Federal Trade Commission to investigate this data breach and to develop safeguards against similar incidents. Task Force members have already taken actions to protect the affected veterans, including working with the credit bureaus to help ensure that veterans receive the free credit report they are entitled to under the law.

Appropriate law enforcement agencies, including the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and the Inspector General of the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA OIG), have launched full-scale investigations into this matter.

Is a reward being offered?

On May 25, 2006, the VA OIG and the FBI announced a \$50,000 reward through the Montgomery County Crime Solvers organization, for information that leads to the recovery of a laptop computer and external hard drive that contained personal information for millions of veterans. Montgomery County Police are working with the FBI and the VA OIG in the investigation of this residential burglary that occurred on May 3, 2006, in the Aspen Hill community of Montgomery County, Maryland. At this stage of the investigation there is no evidence that the suspect or suspects responsible for the theft had any knowledge of what information was stored on the hard drive. The primary objective of the investigation is the recovery of the laptop and external hard drive. Anyone who can provide information that leads to the recovery of the laptop and external hard drive that contains the veterans' data should call Crime Solvers of Montgomery County at 1-866-411-TIPS (8477), or the FBI tip line at 800-225-5324. A cash reward of \$50,000 will be paid for information provided to either tip line that leads to the recovery of these items.

What about the FBI Tip Line?

Beginning June 14, 2006, the FBI has set up a staffed 24-hour tip line to further the investigation into the stolen laptop and external hard drive which contained personal information about millions of veterans. The FBI toll-free tip line, 1-800-CALL FBI (1-800-225-5324), is only used in the highest profile cases investigated by the FBI. The line is answered by an FBI employee twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. Anyone who wishes to remain anonymous can ask for a reference number in lieu of providing a name. Information can still be provided toll-free through the Montgomery County, Maryland Crime Solvers line at 1-866-411-TIPS (8477), to be eligible for the reward. On June 6, 2006, detectives released a model number for the stolen laptop. It is a Hewlett Packard (HP) Pavilion Notebook Laptop. It could be identified as either model number zv5360us or 5300 series. The external hard drive is a HP External Personal Media Drive. Investigators believe

that it is possible these items could have been separated. Anyone who purchased a second-hand or used laptop and/or external hard drive with these model numbers after May 3, 2006, is asked to call either the FBI tip line or the Crime Solver line. The emphasis of the investigation is on the recovery of the items stolen in a residential burglary that occurred on May 3, 2006, in the Aspen Hill area of Montgomery County, Maryland. Anyone who is in possession of this stolen property can turn it in anonymously and become eligible for the reward.

How is information about this incident being shared?

We are providing as much information as we have about the incident and alerting veterans of the situation. We are in the process of indentifying who may have been affected so we can provide them more information, where possible. Veterans should continue to monitor this web page (<http://www.firstgov.gov/veteransinfo>) for further updates. VA has set up a manned call center that veterans may call to get information about this situation and learn more about consumer identity protections. Concerned veterans may call 1 (800) FED INFO (1-800-333-4636). The call center will operate from 8 am to 9 pm (EDT), Monday-Saturday, as long as it is needed. The call center can handle up to 20,000 calls per hour (260,000 calls per day).

When will more information be available?

Beginning June 3, 2006, letters are being sent to all affected veterans. If information about you was included in the data that was stolen, you will receive a letter. Continue to visit [this web page](#) for updates. We will also continue to make public service announcements to publicize new information. We continue to urge veterans, service-members, and reservists to be vigilant in checking activities on their various accounts.

What will be done to prevent this from happening in the future?

VA has safeguards in place for use and release of private information. VA provides ongoing privacy training to all employees and has directed all VA employees to complete the cyber security and privacy awareness courses by June 30, 2006.

TSP CORNER

TSP Withdrawal Sheet

As a separated participant, you can choose one or more TSP withdrawal options. You may request a one-time partial withdrawal of at least \$1,000 or more from your account, and leave the remaining balance in the TSP until a later date. When you are ready to withdraw your entire balance, you may receive a single payment, a series of monthly payments, a TSP annuity, or you may combine one or more of these options. If you elect a partial withdrawal, single payment or short-term monthly payments based on a dollar amount, you may transfer all or part of your payment(s) into an Individual Retirement Arrangement (IRA) or other eligible retirement plan. You may also leave your balance in the TSP and make a

withdrawal decision later. The TSP does not require you begin a full withdrawal of your account until after you have separated and have attained age 70½.

If you choose to leave your balance in the TSP, it will continue to accrue earnings based on the funds your balance is invested in. You may continue to make interfund transfers to move the balance around among the funds. This may be completed on the TSP Web site under the "Account Access" section or you may contact the TSP Service Office to make your request. Until you request a withdrawal with Form TSP-70, you may transfer in money from other eligible retirement plans or traditional IRAs with Form TSP-60, Request for a Transfer into the TSP.

All of the TSP forms and publications mentioned below are available on the TSP web site under "Forms and Publications" (*be sure to obtain the forms for civilians.*) You may print the withdrawal forms, complete and mail them to the TSP (*address is provided on each form*) for processing and payment. However, if you use your TSP PIN, the "Account Access" section of the TSP web site allows you to fill out your withdrawal form, print it, and in some instances, submit it online for processing and payment. If you need a TSP PIN, you may request one from the "Account Access" section of the TSP web site or by contacting the TSP Service Office. Your new PIN will be mailed to your address of record within 10 business days. The TSP Service Office is your contact regarding your TSP account *after* you leave Federal Service:

Thrift Savings Plan TSP Web Site: http://www.tsp.gov	1-TSP-YOU-FRST (1-877-968-3778) (toll-free) TDD: 1-TSP-THRIFT-5 (1-877-847-4385) (limited availability outside of the U.S.)	Outside of the United States and Canada: (404) 233-4000
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The following forms and booklets are available to withdraw your account, or obtain information about taxes and TSP annuities:

- TSPBK02, Withdrawing Your TSP Account After Leaving Federal Service
- TSP-536, Important Tax Information About Payments From Your TSP Account
- Form TSP-77, Partial Withdrawal Request
- Form TSP-70, Full Withdrawal Request
- Form TSP-16, Exception to Spousal Requirements (if applicable)
- TSPBK05, TSP Annuities

To keep your account information up to date:

- TSP-3, Designation of Beneficiary
- TSP-9, Change of Address for Separated Participants (*You may also contact the TSP to update your address*)

If you cannot obtain the above information via the TSP web site and would like to receive a package by mail, please send your name and address to: *(specify operations center address to include ATTN name, room number, TSP Package) AND/OR please call (provide contact name phone number). Please try to keep this as a one-sided document.*

TSP RATES OF RETURN

Rates of Return were updated on July 5, 2006

May 2006	G Fund	F Fund	C Fund	S Fund	I Fund
	0.44%	(0.19%)	(0.07%)	(0.47%)	(0.00%)
Last 12 Months (07/1/2005-06/31/2006)	4.77%	(0.75%)	8.59%	14.43%	26.57%

*The G, F, C, S, and I Fund returns for the last 12 months assume unchanging balances (time-weighting) from month to month, and assume that earnings are compounded on a monthly basis.

June 2006	L2040	L2030	L2020	L2010	L Income
	0.26%	0.27%	0.28%	0.37%	0.33%

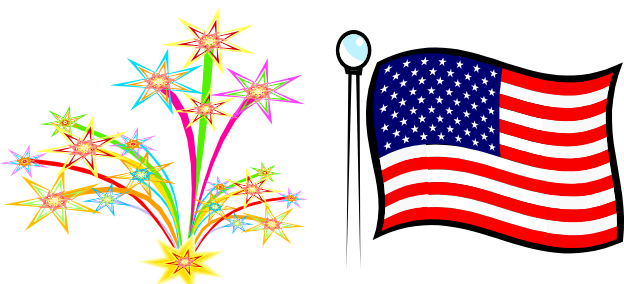
*The monthly G, F, C, S, and I fund returns represent the change in their respective share prices for the month. The changes in share prices reflect net earnings after accrued TSP administrative expenses have been deducted. The F, C, S, and I fund share prices also reflect the deduction of trading costs and accrued investment management fees.

The TSP is a retirement savings plan for civilian federal employees. The monthly G, F, C, S, and I Fund returns represent the actual total rates used to allocate monthly earnings to participant accounts. Allocations are usually completed by the fourth business day of the month. The returns are shown after deduction of accrued TSP administrative expenses. The F, C, S, and I Fund returns also reflect the deduction of trading costs and accrued investment management fees.

The TSP performance history for the past 12 months can be accessed through the following link:

http://www.tsp.gov/curinfo/annuity_history.html

Happy Independence Day!



PAY CORNER

Federal Wage System Regular and Special Production Facilitating Wage Rate Schedules for the Lake Charles-Alexandria, Louisiana (RUS) Wage Area Issue Date: 20 June 2006

The schedules shown below have been established under authority of DoD Directive 5120.39, dated April 24, 1980, subject to the limitations contained in CPM 2005-27, dated 22 December 2005. Rates are established as required by 5 USC 5343(d), if applicable, and are to be applied in accordance with the provisions of 5 CFR Part 532 to all employees whose official duty station is located within the geographic boundary of the wage area.

WG WL-WS GRADE	WG-RATES					WL RATES					WS-WD-WN RATES					WD-WN PAY LEVEL1
1	8.99	9.37	9.74	10.12	10.50	9.90	10.31	10.71	11.14	11.54	16.49	17.17	17.86	18.53	19.23	
2	10.08	10.51	10.93	11.35	11.77	11.10	11.55	12.02	12.49	12.94	17.58	18.31	19.04	19.77	20.50	
3	11.94	12.44	12.93	13.43	13.93	13.14	13.68	14.24	14.78	15.34	19.43	20.24	21.04	21.87	22.67	1
4	13.80	14.38	14.95	15.52	16.10	15.18	15.81	16.45	17.09	17.71	21.30	22.19	23.06	23.95	24.84	2
5	15.67	16.31	16.96	17.62	18.27	17.22	17.95	18.66	19.38	20.09	23.15	24.12	25.06	26.04	27.00	3
6	17.52	18.26	18.99	19.71	20.44	19.28	20.07	20.88	21.67	22.47	25.01	26.05	27.09	28.14	29.18	4
7	19.39	20.19	21.00	21.80	22.61	21.33	22.22	23.09	23.98	24.87	26.87	27.99	29.10	30.23	31.35	5
8	21.03	21.96	22.82	23.70	24.59	23.23	24.19	25.17	26.11	27.07	28.37	29.54	30.72	31.89	33.09	6
9	22.63	23.57	24.52	25.43	26.40	24.87	25.89	26.94	27.96	29.02	29.86	31.10	32.34	33.59	34.83	7
10	24.09	25.09	26.08	27.11	28.10	26.51	27.62	28.74	29.83	30.94	31.35	32.67	34.02	35.28	36.65	8
11	25.42	26.55	27.60	28.69	29.73	28.07	29.23	30.36	31.58	32.74	31.97	33.25	34.65	35.93	37.30	9
12	26.85	28.01	29.11	30.23	31.33	29.54	30.74	32.03	33.24	34.46	32.54	33.90	35.26	36.62	38.00	10
13	28.28	29.41	30.62	31.76	33.00	31.12	32.40	33.69	35.01	36.31	33.36	34.73	36.17	37.54	38.94	11
14	29.63	30.86	32.09	33.34	34.63	32.63	34.01	35.32	36.71	38.06	34.30	35.76	37.18	38.61	40.04	12
15	31.06	32.36	33.64	34.92	36.25	34.18	35.57	37.01	38.48	39.90	35.16	36.63	38.09	39.56	41.01	13
											WS-16	36.02	37.52	39.01	40.52	42.01
											WS-17	36.97	38.53	40.06	41.59	43.14
											WS-18	38.03	39.63	41.21	42.79	44.38
											WS-19	38.17	39.76	41.35	42.94	44.53

R. CRAIG JERABEK
Chief
Wage and Salary Division

Order Date: 18 April 2006
Effective Date: 25 June 2006
Supersedes Schedule Issued 21 June 2005

BENEFITS CORNER

Did you know that a court order can affect your benefits? The following Q&As may be of assistance:

Q: Now that I am divorced, may I change my health insurance company?

A: Yes, divorce is an event that allows you to change from one plan or option to another. To do this, you should complete an SF-2809 and submit it to your personnel office within 60 days of the divorce.

Q: I still have children to cover under my health insurance and want to keep the same plan. How do I take my spouse's name off of my health insurance?

A: You should call your insurance company and tell them. There is no requirement to complete a new SF-2809.

Q: What about my beneficiary forms?

A: If you have designated your former spouse for your TSP, FEGLI insurance, Unpaid Compensation, and/or CSRS/FERS retirement lump sum payment, you will need to fill out a new designation of beneficiary for each program. The event (divorce) in itself does not change your beneficiary form(s). The employee must initiate the change.

Q: What is a certified copy of a court order?

A: Certified copy is a copy of the order signed and certified by an official of the court that issued the order, verifying that it is a true copy of the original.

Q: I am divorced and have a court order requiring me to provide health insurance to my former spouse and children. Since my former spouse is currently covered, I plan to keep him/her on my FEHB. My children are living with my former spouse. May my former spouse and children continue to be covered?

A: Since you are divorced, your former spouse is no longer an eligible family member, regardless of the court order, and cannot be covered under FEHB. You must provide health insurance through some other means other than FEHB. The former spouse, however, may enroll in Temporary Continuation of Coverage (TCC), or if the spouse has an annuity right, upon approval from OPM, may enroll in FEHB under the Spouse Equity Act. If the children are your biological or adopted children, you can cover the children under self and family enrollment in FEHB regardless of where the children live. If the children are the former spouse's biological or adopted children, coverage must be provided through TCC, the spouse's self and family policy, or other private insurance.

HOLIDAY/LIBERAL LEAVE SCHEDULE FOR 2006

HOLIDAY	DATE DESIGNATED	TRAINING/ LIBERAL LEAVE
Martin Luther King Birthday	16 Jan 2006	13 Jan 2006
Washington's Birthday	20 Feb 2006	17 Feb 2006
Memorial Day	29 May 2006	26 May 2006
Independence Day	04 Jul 2006	03 Jul 2006
Labor Day	04 Sep 2006	01 Sep 2006
Columbus Day	10 Oct 2006	*Pending
Veterans' Day	11 Nov 2006	*Pending
Thanksgiving Day	24 Nov 2006	*Pending
Christmas Day	25 Dec 2006	*Pending

LEAVE TRANSFER PROGRAM

Would you like to assist a co-worker who is in need of annual leave? Then consider donating annual leave to employees enrolled in the Voluntary Leave Transfer Program. To donate leave, submit a "Leave Transfer Authorization" FP Form 25, to the CPAC at Bldg. 412. We are currently accepting leave donations for the following:

***Jerry L. McDonald, BJAC – CPB 15-06**

***Hurricane Katrina victims CPB 21-05**

(For more info regarding Katrina ELTP please refer to the link below and click on CPB 21-05 dated 2 Dec 2005): <http://www.jrtc-polk.army.mil/cpac/CPB2005.htm>

If you have any questions regarding leave transfer contact an HR Advisor at the CPAC.

MANDATORY TRAINING



Mandatory Training for July FY 06

will be conducted during the employee's birth month. Employees and their supervisors have the opportunity to choose between two dates to attend the training. Everyone is required to attend this training.... Mark your calendar and plan to attend. The location of the training classes will be at the new Library/Education Center, Bldg. 660.

The July 2006 training dates are:

11 July 2006

26 July 2006

The schedule of training is as follows:

0800-0930 - Alcohol & Drug Abuse
 0930-0940 - break
 0940-1010- Security
 1010-1020 - break
 1020-1120 - DA Ethics Training
 1140-1230 - Lunch
 1230-1430 - E/POSH
 1445-1600 - Environmental

If you have any questions regarding the above training schedule please contact Tami Culbreath at 531-1856.

Look at a day when you are
supremely satisfied at the end. It's
not a day when you lounge around
doing nothing; its when you had
everything to do, and you've done it.

-Margaret Thatcher

Employee Wellness

**BAYNE-JONES ARMY COMMUNITY HOSPITAL
BJACH HEALTH AWARENESS**

"IS YOUR CHILD SAFE AT HOME?"

Children are naturally curious. They like to explore, put things in their mouths, play with hanging cords, stick their fingers in unusual places and push or pull on furniture or heavy items. Young children do not have the experience or judgment to act safely and need to be protected against hurting themselves. Older children want to do many things and must learn how to do them safely. As a parent, you are your child's best safeguard against injury or potential loss of life. Listed below are suggested measures that you can take to help ensure a safe environment in your home.

Kitchen Safety:

- ✓ Install quality safety latches on drawers and cabinets that are within a child's reach.
- ✓ Keep all sharp utensils, wastebaskets and household cleaning products in a latched drawer or cabinet.
- ✓ Appliance cords should not dangle from the counter-top. A curious child could pull on that cord and bring a heavy appliance onto his head or body.
- ✓ Cook using the back burners of your stove and turn pot handles toward the rear of the stove so your child can't pull hot food on himself. Consider removing stove knobs to prevent curious little fingers from turning on the knobs. If you remove the knobs, keep one handy to use while cooking and store in a drawer when not in use.

- ✓ Dishwashing detergent should only be poured immediately before you wash dishes.
- ✓ If your kitchen has a trash compactor, keep it latched. If it is key operated, keep the key out of reach from your child.
- ✓ Keep a fire extinguisher readily accessible in the kitchen and know how to use it.
- ✓ Post emergency phone numbers by the phone or on your refrigerator. Include police, fire, poison control, hospital, family doctor and ambulance service. When in doubt, call 911.
- ✓ Be careful with the use of tablecloths or placemats – your baby could pull them and what's on them down.
- ✓ Prevent access to pet bowls of food and water. A child could drown in the water or choke on food.

Bathroom Safety:

- ✓ Never leave standing water in the tub or sink. It takes very little water to create a drowning hazard.
- ✓ **NEVER** leave your child unattended in the bath. A good rule of thumb is to keep one hand on your child at all times while bathing. If you must leave the room, wrap your child in a towel and take him/her with you.
- ✓ Reduce your hot water heater temperature to 120 degrees. A baby's skin is more sensitive than an adult's. What is warm to us can scald a small infant.
- ✓ Install a spout cover to protect from falls.
- ✓ Use a non-slip mat or use non-slip stickers in the tub to prevent falls.
- ✓ Remove items from around the tub ring (shampoo, conditioner, razors). When bar soap becomes small enough to fit into a toddler's mouth, it becomes a choking hazard.
- ✓ Consider installing a lid lock on all toilets. Toddlers can drown in just a few inches of water.
- ✓ Install safety latches on bathroom cabinets and drawers.
- ✓ Put wastebaskets under the sink and latch the cabinet door.
- ✓ Ensure that the bathroom door cannot be locked by a child.
- ✓ While using your bathtub, keep all electrical appliances such as electrical razors, toothbrushes, hair blowers, curling irons,

radios and especially electrical heaters unplugged and locked in a cabinet, away from the reach of children. ***Remember water and electricity are a fatal mix.***

The Health Promotion Program at BJACH will be providing Health Awareness information at the PX on 7 & 21 July 2006 in recognition of National Summer Safety. For more information, you may contact us at 531-6880.

HOME SAFETY & INJURY PREVENTION

How well prepared are you to keep your home safe and protect yourself and family from potential injury? Test Your Knowledge and see.

1. How often should you check the batteries of your smoke detector and vacuum it to remove dust?

- A) monthly
- B) yearly
- C) weekly

2. The Heimlich maneuver is an important skill for rescuing a person from...

- A) a heart attack.
- B) a broken limb.
- C) choking.

3. If you smell smoke coming under a door, before opening the door always...

- A) feel the bottom of the door.
- B) open the window.
- C) feel the whole door to make sure it's not hot.

4. To prevent injury to small children, keep your hot water temperature...

- A) below 150° F.
- B) below 120° F.
- C) below 100° F.

5. For safety, store medicines...

- A) on a high shelf in the bathroom.
- B) in a locked drawer or cabinet in the bedroom.
- C) in the kitchen.

6. If a person has been electrocuted, you should first...

- A) turn off the power, if possible.
- B) call 911.
- C) move the person away from the source of

electricity.

7. If you find a substance in an unlabeled container,...

- A) sniff the contents to try to identify it.
- B) ask a knowledgeable person what it might be.
- C) treat the chemical as a hazardous waste and dispose of it accordingly.

8. The first thing to do when using a household chemical is:

- A) read the label.
- B) transfer it to a smaller container.
- C) close doors and windows to keep fumes localized.

9. Never leave a small child alone in the bath...

- A) for more than 5 minutes.
- B) for more than 1 minute.
- C) at all.

10. Potentially poisonous household materials include...

- A) cleaning supplies, gardening supplies and pesticides.
- B) vitamins and painkillers.
- C) houseplants.
- D) all of the above.

11. The first thing to do if you think someone has eaten something poisonous:

- A) induce vomiting immediately.
- B) call a poison control center immediately.
- C) rush the person to the hospital.

12. If you spill a harsh chemical such as acid or lye on your skin, ...

- A) wash the area with soap and water and apply ointment.
- B) run water over the area for at least 15 minutes and call your doctor.
- C) neutralize the chemical with vinegar or baking soda.

13. Which of the following is the best way to put out a grease fire?

- A) Put ice in the pan.
- B) Pour flour in the pan.
- C) Put a lid on the pan.

14. The one thing you should never use on an electrical fire is...

A) a blanket. B) water. C) baking soda.

15. If your clothes catch fire, the first thing you should do is:

A) stop, drop and roll.

B) run.

C) take your clothes off.

16. Most home fires that kill older adults are caused by...

A) portable heaters. B) grease. C) cigarettes.

17. When escaping a burning, smoke-filled house, always...

A) stand up straight and run.

B) stay low and crawl.

C) wait for help to come.

18. Family safety skills you can learn in most communities include...

A) emergency first aid.

B) CPR.

C) both of the above.

Home Safety and Injury Prevention Answers:

1. A; 2. C; 3. C; 4. B; 5. B; 6. A; 7. C;
8. A; 9. C; 10. D; 11. B; 12. B; 13. C; 14. B;
15. A; 16. C; 17. B; 18. C.

Questions & answers provided by Parlay International

In recognition of National Summer Safety Awareness, the Health Promotion Program will be providing awareness at the Post Exchange on 7 & 21 2006 from 10 AM to 1 PM. For more information on this and other topics, contact the Health Promotion Program at 531-6880.

ARTICLES FOR BULLETIN

If you have any suggestions on topics or issues that you would like addressed in future bulletins, please submit them to one of the following:

1. Laura.mireles@us.army.mil
2. Call 531-4020

Suggestions will be reviewed and addressed if at all possible.

//Original Signed//

DONALD R. MALLET

Director, Civilian Personnel

Advisory Center

BRAIN TEASER ANSWER

Whitcomb L. Judson invented the zipper and YKK is the Japanese company that makes them.